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The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian.

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Wayside Gatherings.

The Challenge of World Peace.

Dr. F. W. Norwood has just completed his six months' campaign in the interests of World Peace. Writing in "The Christian World," Dr. Norwood states: "I have returned from my mission saddened rather than exhilarated. I have no reason to be disgruntled. Everybody says I have had a wonderfully successful mission. I certainly found a more responsive public than I had anticipated. I think I have met many of the very best people in the land—and they all hate war. If they are representative, and I believe they are, we have this phenomenon: the people loathe war, but they cannot get away from it . . . That is a portent. In its depth and intensity it is a new factor in things. Some say it is a passing phase. The next generation will revert to more primitive ideas. We had better ponder it. It is a question in the realm of psychology rather than of politics. We had better call history to the bar and listen to her testimony."

What is My Response ?

The centenary of the death of William Blake is drawing near and it may not be inappropriate to quote, in connection with the desire for peace, one of his magnificent utterances: "Thou hast a lap full of seed, and this is a fine country. Why dost thou not cast thy seed and live in it merrily ? "

On Having Our Fling.

"Yes, let us have our fling for God, for goodness, for a more decent human life, for peace against war, for justice against greed, for vital religion against a stereotyped church. Let us have our fling and see what we make of our personalities before we are through. That is liberty, that is release." Dr. Emerson Fosdick.

One of Dean Inge's Stories.

Dean Inge tells of a howler on the part of a schoolboy once under his care, who wrote, "the Pharisees were a mean and stingy lot. One of them brought a penny to our Lord and when He had looked at it He said, "Whose miserable subscription is this ? "

How to deal with the Liquor Traffic.

Here are three ways suggested by Mr. Phillip Snowden, M.P.: Improvement of Social Conditions, personal abstinence and example, and by the democratic vote. Mr. Snowden said he was convinced, if a vote were taken, a large number of people who liked their drink would vote in favour of prohibition in order to remove temptations from the path of their weaker brethren. Speaking on the same subject the Rev. T. Rhondda Williams said: "In modern conditions they could not lay the whole burden upon the individual; it was necessary to change the conditions which were making the right kind of life so hard—the processes by which men earned their daily bread had to be christianised. "We have got to realise that men are sinning in systems, and cannot be saved from their sins unless they are saved from their systems."

An Influence.

I have read that on the day of Longfellow's funeral a great company gathered to show their respect for the great soul whose earthly toil was now ended ; amongst them came Emerson whose mighty powers were now failing. He stood for a moment looking down at the peaceful face of the dead poet, and at last turned sadly away saying: "The gentleman we are burying to-day was a sweet and beautiful soul, but I forget his name." Longfellow's name was forgotten, together with his words, but the memory of his goodness was indelible. What we **are** is always of more importance than what we do, character more powerful than words, and more enduring. A. W.

Notes of the Month.

Sunday School Conference.

By the time the issue of this magazine reaches our readers they will have observed that the Sunday School Conference is due to be held on Saturday, June 4th, at 4 p.m., in the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church, Newry. This Annual fixture has now for many years established itself as a popular event in the estimation of members of our churches. It has served to keep the importance of Sunday School religious instruction before our people and has proved a rallying point for social intercourse—in itself a valuable asset from the point of view of denominational solidarity. It is anticipated that a large number of Sunday School teachers and those interested in religious instruction will find their way to Newry on June 4th. We understand that our Newry friends are expecting large contingents from the various centres connected with our churches. The festival is generally favoured by fine weather, and no doubt a large number of our people will foregather on this occasion. The Newry congregation will be especially pleased to receive the Conference this year and to welcome a large contingent of their co-religionists, the more so inasmuch as they, as a congregation, are somewhat far from the centre of our community of churches. There can be no doubt that they will receive a kindly and genial welcome from Rev. G. J. and Mrs. Slipper, and the Newry Congregation. The chair will be taken by the Moderator (Rev. Edgar Lockett) and an address will be given by Rev. S. P. Whitehouse, on "Through Humour to Religion." The subject is a striking one, and possibly requires more attention from Sunday School teachers than it has received in the past. We anticipate an address out of the common run with a fruitful and stimulating discussion to follow. We find that the Conference will close at 5-30 when tea will be provided by the kind hospitality of the Newry Congregation. Train to Newry from Belfast, G.N.R., 2-30 p.m. Return from Newry, 7-45 p.m. Return fare 2/6. Given good climatic conditions we see no reason why the Newry Conference may not equal, if not surpass, those of former years.

The General Synod.

By the middle of this month representatives of our Church, Ministerial and Lay, will have an opportunity of meeting together for encouragement in well-doing and refreshment of spirit in the work of promoting the principles of Non-Subscribing Christianity for which our churches in the past made so many sacrifices and endured so much tribulation. In those days the fathers of our church felt that their energies were well-spent in manfully upholding the rights of conscience and in declaring the truth of God as it appealed to their understanding. The same loyalty to principle is as urgent to-day, as ever it was in the days of the disruption. Convinced loyalty demands even more concentration in quiet and peaceful times than in those exhilarating contests when, with the utmost vigour, staunch adherence to principle was assailed. There is great need of consolidating our forces that we may bring them to bear more effectively on modern problems generally, but more particularly to set our own house in order, to increase its efficiency, to gather together in earnest consultation to learn more definitely what personalities may be relied upon to make Non-Subscribing Christianity a name to conjure with. The omens now are more favourable for the principles of Non-Subscription to dogmatic tests than at any time during the whole course of Christian history, because there is more groping after freedom from dogmatism among the members of various Christian Churches. As the Dean of St. Paul's said on May 12th, at the City Temple: "This is a time when we all long to be free from shams and conventions and to be in touch with realities. The younger generation are impatient of traditional views. They want first hand experience and original thought. They will listen eagerly and respectfully when any one speaks to them from the heart. The fences erected by traditional propriety are everywhere being broken down." This is our opportunity for proving to the world that our principles are in accord with the best thoughts of to-day, and that we have no fear as to what the future has in store for men and women who are true to the best instincts God has planted in them.

The announcement of the Meetings of the Synod which will be found on another page reminds our readers of the chief Annual Meetings connected with our Non-Subscribing Church. It will be noticed that the Clerk has furnished a detailed account of all the Meetings to be held on

Tuesday and Wednesday, June 14th and 15th.

This appears to be an appropriate opportunity for asking our readers to take special notice of the hours at which the various Meetings are held that a full representation not only of the Churches in and around Belfast, but also of other town and country churches. The Synod Meeting being held in Belfast and centrally situated for our group of churches there should be no insuperable difficulty in securing large and representative gatherings.

Urgent appeals have been made from time to time both to Ministers and lay representatives to diplay more active interest in and deeper loyalty to our Church Courts. The response has not invariably been forthcoming with the result that could be reasonably expected. The roll-call has frequently had blank spaces under the headings both of ministers and representatives of churches. The majority of ministers are usually loyal to their duties, but elders and representatives of Churches can hardly be said to come in adequate numbers.

The Church courts are a representative body selected by the constituent churches. The officers appointed to do the executive work of the whole church deserve loyal support and fuller sympathy than is usually accorded to them. They need the advice and first hand knowledge of conditions in the Churches which the representatives are competent to give, and they are the final authority for whatever action is taken in the Church Courts. Our system of Church government wisely applied to the advantage of our congregations is second to no other devised by any Christian Church ; but negligently administered it becomes the prey of individual idiosyncracy and caprice. That this prognostic may never in part become partially true, we appeal most earnestly to ministers, elders, and church members generally for more sustained support and loyal fidelity to their General Synod.

The Dean of Ripon writes : " The development of Christ in man is the object of Christianity." Then he goes on to explain what the Christ in man is : " It is the wisdom of the man of science ; it is the eloquence of the lawyer ; it is the fairness of the judge ; it is the love of beauty in the artist ; it is the love of man in the philanthropist."

Meetings of the General Synod, 1927.

The attention of members of our Churches is drawn to the meetings of the General Synod of the Church which will be held in the First Presbyterian Church, Belfast, on Tuesday and Wednesday, June 14th, and 15th.

This year the Committee has been fortunate in securing the presence of the Rev. T. Rhondda Williams of Brighton, who has promised to deliver the Annual Lecture on Wednesday evening, 15th June, at 7 p.m. His subject will be "What is Christian Experience ?" Mr. Williams is the Minister of the Union Congregational Church, Brighton, having succeeded the Rev. R. J. Campbell, in 1909. His books and writings are widely known and his ready acceptance of our invitation should ensure a large and representative audience on the occasion of his visit. A special appeal is made to all members of our Churches who can, to attend the meetings, and after the address delivered by Rev. A. Gordon, M.A., last year, the Committee are hopeful of a larger attendance of both ministers and laymen.

The following is the programme of Meetings, subject to alterations, Tuesday, June 14th :—

12 noon.—Annual Meeting of Remonstrant Synod of Ulster.

8 p.m.—Divine Service with Sermon, conducted by the Moderator (Rev. E. Lockett). Collection on behalf of the Incidental Expenses Fund.

Tea will be served in Central Hall, from 5-30 to 6-30.

Wednesday, June 15th : —

10-30 a.m.—Communion Service, conducted by the Moderator.

11 a.m.—Business Meeting of General Synod.

5-30 p.m.—Annual Dinner (place not settled).

8 p.m.—Lecture by Rev. T. Rhondda Williams. Collection on behalf of the Incidental Expenses Fund.

All Meetings will be held in the First Presbyterian Church, Belfast.

He drew a circle and shut me out—
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.
But Love and I had the wit to win ;
We drew a circle that took him in.

"Religious Truth Outside Christianity."

By The Rev. S. P. Whitehouse.

Text I Corinthians 14 : 10 : "There are—so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification."

A man whose knowledge of religion is confined to Christianity, no matter how thorough and complete that knowledge may be, knows very little about religion. In the religious world there have been and still are, many voices coming from many faiths and none of them is without signification.

The voice of Christianity is but one of many that speak on behalf of God ; and failure to appreciate this fact is to stop one's ears to the Great Chorus of Praise and Adoration which has ascended to Heaven from peoples of all places and all times.

Until comparatively recent times, Christianity was regarded as a great spiritual light which had come into a world black with moral darkness.

It was quite common for preachers to draw pictures of the Pre-Christian world wallowing in sin and degradation, and then dramatically and triumphantly relate how the Christian Religion suddenly changed all this.

We now know from the study of Comparative Religion how utterly false and misleading such a picture is.

No religion ever was born into such a world, least of all the Christian religion.

No religion could be born into such a world.

The light of Christianity did not rise on a darkened world; it rose on a world already illuminated by the lights of other religions, each regarding itself as the central orb and the other as unimportant satellites in the religious firmament. Christianity certainly brought light into the world—the New Testament proves this conclusively—but it did not bring light into a world that had previously known only darkness.

All the great world religions, without exception, have contributed to the world's enlightenment and it is beyond human power to estimate the exact amount contributed by each.

Much spiritual and moral light had streamed on the world from the Sacred Scriptures of the Egyptians, the Chinese, the Persians, the Brahmans and the Buddhists, long before it was illuminated by the light from the Christian Bible.

As far back as recorded history is able to take us, we find man not only very much concerned with religion, but concerned with very little else.

The first civilisation of which we have any records is the Ancient Egyptian civilisation which dates back to at least 3,400 B.C.

Some of the texts from the Egyptian Sacred Scriptures, "The Book of the Dead," would not be out of place in our Bible. They show that the dwellers on the banks of the Nile, even at this early period, possessed very high conceptions of Truth, Justice and Righteousness.

The Egyptians set Truth-speaking above all other virtues. They believed in the existence of God Almighty who was a God of Justice and who, in the Day of Judgment would grant life eternal to all who had lived uprightly while on earth. Immortality could be obtained only by belief in this Supreme God of Justice and unbelievers could not enter the Heavenly Kingdom.

Some of these Sacred Texts are so beautiful both in language and sentiment that one finds it difficult to believe that they were written over 5,000 years ago—at least 2,500 years before the earliest book of the Bible was written.

In the Vedas, the Sacred Scriptures of the Hindus, which go back to at least 1,500 B.C., there are passages which remind us of some of the most exalted phrases of the Old Testament. Some of the Vedic Hymns bear a striking similarity to the Hebrew Psalms and were it not for the fact that they were composed over a thousand years before the Psalms, we might suspect plagiarism.

The Sacred Books of the Chinese are full of sentiments which many people are in the habit of regarding as peculiar to the Christian Religion.

For instance, the high-water mark of Christianity is reached in the Golden Rule, "all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them" and there are not a few who seem to think that nothing like it is met with elsewhere.

The truth is that Confucius taught the Golden Rule centuries before a word of the New Testament was written. It is found in many places in the Chinese Scriptures. It is very clearly taught in the answer of Confucius to the question "Is there

any one word that may serve as a rule of practice for all one's life ?

The answer is, " Is not reciprocity such a word ? What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others."

Buddhism also has much to teach the world about religion. One cannot read passages from the Buddhist Bible like " Hatred does not cease by hatred at any time ; hatred ceases by love," without immediately thinking of " love your enemies," uttered over 500 years later by the humble Galilean.

It is sometimes said that Christians would do well to take note of the Fifth Buddhist Commandment, " Thou shalt not intoxicate thyself."

It is nothing short of presumption for the orthodox Christian to think that he has all the religious truth that is worth having, that Christians are God's Chosen People, and that people of other religions are wallowing in spiritual and moral darkness. Yet one gathers this, or something very much like it, from the utterances of many orthodox Christians.

For instance one orthodox hymn has it that—

" The heathen in his blindness,
Bows down to wood and stone."

Nothing could be farther from the truth. A Hindoo on his knees before an image of the Buddha is not worshipping that image any more than a Christian kneeling before a cross is worshipping that cross.

Both are worshipping the Power behind the symbol, the Great Imcomprehensible and Unseen Power that was partially revealed in the Buddha and in Jesus, and failure to realise this shows a pettiness of outlook and a narrowness of mind which is very near to religious fanaticism.

For our part we refuse to draw a line round the Christian religion and say that outside this line there is no religious truth.

We hold that no religious system has the right to say that it alone is genuine and all other religions are false.

We will not regard Christianity as the one light shining in a spiritually dark world.

Christianity is one of many stars shining in the religious firmament, the brightest perhaps, and the most durable, but still only one of the many stars by which man has steered his course towards the Eternal Haven.

To many people Christianity and religion are but two names for the same thing. Not so to us.

We maintain that religion is much greater that Christianity ; it is the Mother of Christianity.

The theological system known as Christianity did not give birth to religion ; it sprang from religion and further, it is by no means the only child. Religion has given birth to many theological systems besides Christianity.

Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Mohammedanism and so on are all members of the same family : not all of equal merit perhaps, but all born of the same mother.

Religion, as it has existed in the heart of man for countless ages, is much greater than all these religious systems put together, and to close one's eye to this fundamental and extremely important truth is to deliberately turn one's back upon facts only too obvious to all fair-minded people. It is like saying that one child is greater than the whole family including the mother, a statement that seems absurd when put in his form but is none the less absurd when disguised in the proposition that " Christianity is the one true religion."

We of the Liberal Christian Faith, while ever mindful of the high spiritual value of Christianity, will not subscribe to the narrow view that it alone contains all God's Truth. In taking this stand we are not trying to destroy religion as is sometimes suggested. On the contrary, we are trying to place it on a stronger and broader foundation than the one provided for it by orthodoxy. If the theological system known as Christianity were swept out of existence to-morrow, orthodox Christians would suddenly find themselves without a faith. To us it would make very little difference because our belief rests on a much surer foundation.

The foundation of our faith is not the Christian System but the Divine Spirit in man that gave birth to the Christian System, that produced other religious systems in the past and will produce others in the future, that wrote the Bible of Christianity and the Bibles of other religions, that will write other Sacred Scriptures in the future and that will continue to write them as long as man is able to put his thoughts into words.

We certainly believe in Christianity but we believe still more in the Divine Spirit which works through human beings and which produced Christianity.

This Divine Spirit did not begin it's activities with Genesis and end them with

Revelation. It was operating in the world thousand of years before the Christian religion was thought of, it was operating during the thousand years which saw the writing of the Bible, it is active to-day in human beings and it will go on influencing men and women as long as this world lasts.

It has produced in the religious world, not one voice, but many voices, "and none of them is without signification."

All these voices bear testimony to the fact that Religion is much greater than all the theological systems put together. They all bear witness to the fact that Divine Truth is not the monopoly of any one particular religious system.

This is what we believe and this is why we refuse to limit and mutilate Divine Truth by forcing it into the moulds of orthodoxy.

Victorian Scholarship.

The proposed New Prayer Book of the Anglican Church was the subject of a great deal of attention at the National Free Church Council Assembly at Birmingham on March 8th. Dr. Barnes, Bishop of Birmingham, in welcoming the Assembly to the City took the opportunity of putting in a plea for modern theological thought. Dr. Barnes said:

"When I think of the weary hours spent at meetings in London, I am inclined to envy churches which have no official liturgy. In the most controversial stages of our revision, we have unfortunately not been concerned with problems of to-day. We have debated at length questions which most of us thought were finally settled in the 6th century.

"The old word 'Transubstantiation' has been replaced by the phrase 'Objective Real Presence.' I am sure that the belief behind either term is demonstrably baseless, as a very experimental psychologist will admit. But because such matters have been pressed upon our attention, we have ignored New Testament modernism.

"Consequently our scholarship is that which flourished at the end of the Victorian era, which, I may remind you, is the time when most of us bishops received our education. Such scholarship is not adequate to-day.

"The best men and women to-day in whatever communion they may be found," remarked the Bishop in conclusion, "would confess themselves seekers for light and truth in religion as in science. We do not in this age turn back to some past finalty of dogma. We look forward with Geothe for more light. Let us look forward with confidence, hope and trust in the guidance of the Spirit. We shall not be disappointed."

Some Impressions of Holland.

(Continued),

Haarlem itself is a very fine town, with a wonderful old Cathedral, having a number of houses and curio-shops nestling up against its walls, a common sight in Holland. When renovating the interior of the church some years ago, the whitewash was removed from the massive pillars and fine paintings were discovered. Old models of olden ships are hung between the pillars. The Church also possesses a beautifully carved pulpit with sounding-board and its organ is one of the finest in the world, containing 5,000 pipes, 64 stops, and 3 key-boards. The Cathedral in Utrecht is also very fine and peculiar in having its tower apart from the Church, the intermediate part having been destroyed by a storm and never replaced. Though Utrecht is a very fine town and possesses some lovely avenues, parks and old University, yet it lacks the fascination and charm of Amsterdam with its semi-circular canals and lovely old houses and warehouses. These latter clustering thickly along the banks of the canals are high and built of dark red brick or painted dark red, having their gables to the street, with white coping rising like steps, often beautifully carved. The canals, when below street-level have often lovely trees growing on the banks, and many fruit and flower shops as well. Many quaint costumes are seen in the streets of Amsterdam, as the women come there to sell their fish or farm produce, or to shop. These costumes consist mostly of very full, long dark skirts, and tight bodice, with brightly patterned cotton vests, epaulettes, and aprons. Children and grown ups are dressed alike, except in the matter of headgear, which varies according to age and position. Rotterdam is a wonderfully clean and busy city, but does not appeal to me as Amsterdam does. Yet I think the ideal way of going to London from Holland or vice versa, in summer is by the

Batavier Line, which leaves Rotterdam at 7 o'clock three evenings each week. It is most interesting to sit on deck and watch the different pleasure-steamers go past, laden with holiday-makers in gay attire who call out greetings as they pass. Not less interesting is it to see the numerous little villages on the banks of the river—Maas—which though seemingly alike, have each their own characteristics.

The Hague, is I think unique in having such beautiful and extensive woods close up to the city, which is very fine and contains some lovely old buildings. Its shops like those of Amsterdam are in some cases quite equal to those in London, except in the matter of prices, which in many cases are twice and three times what one would pay at home for the same thing. This is supposed to be due to the fact that duty has to be paid on everything entering Holland, except that which comes from the Dutch colonies. Near the Hague is the old palace called Huis t'eu Bosch or House in the Wood, which contains a wonderful collection of paintings, carving, and exquisite embroideries on satin, as well as tapestries and needlework carpets. One of the most peculiar effects of the flatness of Holland is to see a boat or barge with sails, apparently skimming over a field, but in reality is on a canal on a level with the field, It is also rather disturbing at first when going along a road to realise that the water is many feet above the level of your head and only kept in bounds by dykes.

With regard to schools, and education generally, I think the Dutch are ahead of us in some respects. Though English, French and German are compulsory subjects, Dutch in everything pertaining to Holland, past or present must take priority in time and importance. If a child is taught at home, the hours and subjects of study, as well as the names and qualifications of its teachers must be given to the authorities. But one misses the tone and spirit of our own schools, especially the big public schools.

Dutch folk seem to me to have some apparently contradictory characteristics. Their love of flowers and music amounts almost to a passion, yet they themselves are solid and phlegmatic to a degree.

However, Holland is well worth a visit, and possesses a charm of its own which no other country I have ever seen, can claim.

Ministers' Provident Fund.

It was decided by Synod at its last Annual Meeting that this fund be established and on a contributory basis. A committee of management was appointed with the Rev. S. E. Bowen as Hon. Secretary and the Rev. A. M. Bell, as Hon. Treasurer.

This Committee has in the meantime drafted Rules and By-Laws for the working of the Fund, and these in due course will be submitted to Synod. It is gratifying to report that already thirteen ministers have joined and paid their first subscriptions and it is hoped that others will soon follow, as the success of the Fund will largely depend on all ministers as far as possible becoming members. It is worthy of record that in addition to his subscription a donation of £10 has been received from the Rev. J. H. Bibby, and £1 from Mr. G. H. Hill, Bangor. These donations, coming in so early are no small encouragement to the Committee of Management.

CONTRIBUTORY INSURANCE FUND.

The following new subscriptions have been communicated to me since the last published list appeared in the February number of the Magazine :—

Previously acknowledged	£287	7	0
Clough Congregation (additional), £6 10s.			
Mr. Hugh Donnan	1	0	0
Miss Donnan	0	10	0
Miss J. Donnan	0	10	0
Mr. S. Robinson	1	0	0
Mr. Hugh Shaw	1	0	0
Mrs. H. Robinson (Tubbercorn) ..	1	0	0
Mrs. J. Nelson	0	10	0
Misses Ferguson (Ballykeel) ..	0	10	0
Miss K. Ferguson (Lisnamaul) ..	0	10	0
Downpatrick Congregation—(£21).			
Mr. S. C. N. Lowry ..	£3	0	0
Mr. Robert Henry ..	1	0	0
Mr. Charles Stewart ..	1	0	0
Miss Rachel Cochrane ..	1	0	0
Miss Jordan ..	1	0	0
Miss Elaine Porter ..	1	0	0
Mr. George MacKenzie ..	1	0	0
Mr. Samuel M'Cullen ..	1	0	0
Mr Johnston Corry ..	1	0	0
Mr. Richard Chambers ..	1	0	0
Mr. H. Dickson ..	1	0	0
Mr Wm. Dickson, Ballykilbeg ..	1	0	0
Mr. Robert Neill, Woodhill ..	0	15	0
Mr John Dickson, Ballydonnell ..	0	10	0
Mr James Dickson	0	10	0
Mr. Edwin Quinn	0	10	0
Mr. James Kelly	0	10	0
Mr. Hugh W. Kelly	0	10	0
Mr. John Killops	0	10	0

Mr. Thomas Huddleston	£0	10	0
Mr. Thomas Hutton	0	10	0
Mr. Archie Farquharson	0	5	0
Mr. John Nesbitt	0	5	0
Mr. Alex. Hutton	0	5	0
Mrs. James Hogg	0	5	0
Mr. Robert Hayes	0	5	0
Mr. Alex. Irvine	0	5	0
Mrs. T. Corry	0	5	0
Mr. James Jervis	0	5	0
Mr. Hugh Cochrane	0	5	0
	£314	17	0

My early departure from the North of Ireland makes it essential that I should close my operations as Hon. Treasurer for the above Fund I cannot do so without gratefully thanking all who have assisted me so generously by their subscriptions.

HERBERT J. ROSSINGTON.

Subscriptions to Debt Extinction Fund.

Already acknowledged	£53	11	1
V. Jennings, Esq.	0	10	0
Miss Morrow, Glenarm.	0	2	0

The Y.M.C.A.

Some years ago, a collection was being made in a certain town for the local Y.M.C.A. One of the collectors called on an influential Unitarian in the town, for a subscription, and showed a circular, at the head of which was the title of the association, and the names of all the clergymen in the town as vice-Presidents, with the exception of the minister of the church with which the gentleman approached was connected. On enquiring the reason for the omission, the reply was one of regret, so far as the collector himself was concerned, but, the constitution debarred the minister in question from being named as one of the Vice-Presidents. "Very well," was the answer, "if you cannot see your way to paying proper respect to my minister, I cannot see my way to giving you a subscription." Under the circumstances the writer considers that a very proper answer to give, to what in reality was a very insulting request, inasmuch that support was asked for a movement, which denied that the minister referred to was a Christian.

At the same time, everywhere, the Y.M.C.A. does not assume that intolerant attitude. But, in Belfast, there seems to be more bigotry according to some who have known the city for a long time, than there was thirty years ago.

The Y.M.C.A. Hall was applied for, not long ago, in connection with a subject which would come under the heading of science rather than religion; but the official applied to, evidently didn't understand what the subject dealt with, for he at once recited a list of those to whom the Hall could not be engaged, and among those named, were the Unitarians. Now, the writer has not the slightest interest in the purpose for which the application was made, but the information concerning the exclusion of Unitarians from ever having the use of the Wellington Hall, gives food for thought. On hearing of this matter, there was some correspondence in consequence. The Basis of Membership is stated as follows:—"The Young Men's Christian Association seeks to unite those young men who regarding Jesus Christ as their God and Saviour according to the Holy Scriptures, desire to be His disciples in their doctrine and in their life, and to associate their efforts for the extension of His Kingdom amongst young men." To the latter part from "desire to be His disciples" there can be no objection; but, the former part means that on a very flimsy foundation, a text from Scripture which in the English revised version is given a comma, and in the American a full-stop, young men in order to join the association must affirm that "they regard Jesus Christ as their God and Saviour according to the Holy Scriptures."

Space does not permit of the series of questions which were asked, being given, but would Dr. Alexander Gordon, the eminent Congregationalist, be admitted who was referred to in these pages, as saying "I am a convinced Trinitarian; but, I have never believed that Jesus was God," or anyone of his following? Would Bible Students who believe that "Christ was the Logos but, who vigorously repudiate the Trinity, and yet are most crudely literal in their acceptance of the Bible, be admitted. The Y.M.C.A. was not very popular prior to the war, but, the churches allowed it to become the agency through which an united work was done. At the same time, it was rather humiliating for any of our ministers to have to go cap in hand, to Y.M.C.A. officials to be allowed to take part as Christian ministers, in any degree whatsoever, in what was the united work of the churches. The Y.M.C.A. red triangle pointing downwards and crossed by a black-band would be taken by some to be an ancient symbol of the Devil.

ULLIN.

The Visit of Rev. Dr. Mellone.

The visit of Rev. Dr. Mellone, Secretary of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association on April 18th, was a very welcome one, and, considering that it was holiday time, there were fair attendances both in the afternoon, when he spoke to ministers and representative laymen on the present position of our English Church and in the evening when he delivered a most interesting lecture on "Recent Science and Religious Belief."

At the close of the lecture in the evening the Rev. Alex. Gordon, M.A., in proposing a hearty vote of thanks to Dr. Mallone, voiced the feelings of all who were privileged to hear so masterly and scholarly a lecture, and Rev. H. J. Rossington, M.A., B.D., seconded the vote which was carried unanimously. The Moderator (Rev. E. Lockett) presided at both meetings and tea was provided by the ladies of the Women's League, Belfast Branch.

Dr. Alexander Irvine, famous both as writer and preacher has had a remarkable career. He joined the army to secure an education, after working in a coal mine. He lectured to the troops in France during the Great War, He says "Old theologies will pass away. The new creeds will be deeds. Men will find their highest good in being and doing. The coming religion will be universal. It will look upon all mankind as one human family, striving for the same ends. In this family there will always be millions of people unable to grasp an abstract idea. For them the symbol of an idea, whether in work, or stone or words, will suffice. They are children in the Kindergarten of God. As the mind clears and the soul rises they will leave the blocks and symbols behind. The coming religion will come slowly. One man on the mountain gives the message to three. The three give it to twelve on the slopes. These take it down to the valley where the crowds are. The permeation may take centuries or even milleniums. But it will come. The vanguard is here now."—Herald of the Star.

"Whether these things (events in the life of Christ) happened in Judea or not, it is at least certain that through all eternity they are happening in the lives of Christian men."—Origen.

Travel.

By D.H.B.

We left New Zealand and came across Canada. We had a wonderful trip across the Canadian Rockies—marvellous scenery and the trains do not go too fast—too dangerous I suppose. We didn't come straight across—we broke our journey at several places, the most beautiful being Lake Louise—a perfect gem—whatever you hear about it—and you hear a good deal! it cannot possibly be exaggerated. Nothing we have seen of the lakes in Italy or Switzerland can compare with it. We also among other places had a few days in New York, we were very much taken with it and I hadn't expected to like it, having rather a prejudice against anything American! I have had a lot of prejudices wiped out on our travels! After three months in London, we had a month on tour to begin with. We started with Bruges, which we all feel in love with—simply must go back there—but not in the summer—can imagine it would not be too pleasant with all those canals in the heat! but what a picturesque little place it is. From Bruges we went to Brussels and never was I in such rain in all my life. It simply teemed—we all rushed to buy goloshes and leggings! Should inagine it is a beautiful city but we really could see so little of it unfortunately. We drove to Antwerp, from there calling at Waterloo-Louvain, on the way but it snowed and we had to have the screens up all the way. Still we saw quite a lot. From Brussels we came down in slow stages through Switzerland and into Italy. The lakes were really beautiful, but coming from a country like New Zealand, where everything is new, the Old World towns appealed to us more than the scenery which in parts is so very like our own—much more beautiful of course. We had four days in Venice, which we saw first by moonlight. It really is most romantic at night—loved it by day too, but we were all so glad we had our first sight of it by moonlight. We only had a week in Florence with the party, but returned on our own later. The tour finished up in Rome where they all left us and we stayed on for five weeks. What a wonderful city! Five weeks was all too short with so much to see, but Italy, especially Rome, is very expensive and we had to leave, but we were all careful to throw coppers into the Trevi Fountain to make

sure of returning!! We went back to Florence for a fortnight, and went as hard as we could to see all we could in the short time; both unforgettable and inexhaustable. After that we had to pull in our horns and find a quiet place to economise for a bit. We stayed at a charming little place on the Italian Riviera called Portofino. It was very quiet there and very cheap, but it was quite comfortable and the cooking was good. We spent most of our time walking. We were all very keen walkers and there were such lots of beautiful places round about that we could walk to. It was very picturesque, with olive covered hills and lots of beautiful cypresses, and everywhere wonderful glimpses of the blue Mediterranean. The village itself was most picturesque with the brown sails of the fishing boats and the green shutters on their yellow and sort of brick coloured houses, such quaint arches everywhere—the place was bristling with artists, and I don't wonder.

We were quite sad to leave Portofino, we were there about six weeks and came on to Nice a fortnight ago. We had a week in Nice and it poured all the time, so we were not sad to leave it. Beaulieu is a beautiful little place, and within reach of Nice and Monte Carlo. I had no idea the Riviera was so beautiful, the cliffs are so wonderful and full of colour. On our way to Nice we stayed in Genoa to enquire about a Dutch line calling at Algiers.

We thoroughly enjoyed our stay in Algiers and I am sure we saw as much as it was possible to see of the town and its surroundings. The native quarter especially was picturesque and interesting. We were sorry we couldn't go out to the Desert, but it proved too big a thing altogether, but still we saw an awful lot and am sure we missed nothing of the town and its surroundings. We had one very beautiful drive all round and really got a very good idea of the place. The forest of Bamen was very beautiful and as it was up in the hills we got a wonderful view of Algiers. I think we all expected more colour in the town itself—certainly I did—but one got used to everything being white or when applied to Arabs, nearly white. Of course the Arabs themselves are most picturesque and so absolutely unselfconscious. They go about sometimes in the most awful rags and yet carry them with quite an air. We had meant to go straight on to Holland when we left Algiers, but were told that we were rather too early yet for the bulbs, so might be able to arrange to stay in Devon.

Holy Communion.

Holy Communion, as celebrated in our Non-Subscribing Churches, is a service peculiarly suited to their mixed congregations. While the celebrations are not all the orthodox desire, they include nothing to which offence may be taken. All may fully share in what is done, in complete agreement.

Among the free and liberal churches of Christendom, there are probably none in which such high views of Communion are generally held as in our Non-Subscribing Churches, and it is strange that a larger place should not be given to the service by them.

It is objected that frequent Communion would destroy the value and impressiveness of the rite. Experience in Roman and Anglican Churches, where Communion is frequently celebrated, proves this fear is groundless. However critical the heterodox may be of the theory underlying Mass, no one can cast doubt on the nobility, dignity and impressiveness of that service. What usually passes for feelings of the impressiveness and dignity of Communion in Non-Subscribing Churches is rarely more than superstitious terror. The common dread of eating and drinking damnation on the part of those who loudly proclaim their disbelief in hell is one of the most astounding inconsistencies in Christendom. This irrational attitude towards the Sacrament is strengthened and supported by the infrequency of its celebration.

Communion is made a very special occasion, and is surrounded with considerable fuss. Our ministers make deliberate attempts to move emotionally the few of their congregations that have courage to come near the Communion Table, and these efforts to work up sentimental feeling are essentially the same as those of evangelical revivalists. The generation of spiritual excitement is not the object of Holy Communion, no matter from what point of view it is regarded.

Whatever else the service may be, it is an act of spiritual communion in which participants are mystically united with God, in Christ, and with the Church of all ages; such spiritual communion ought not to be occasional. The aim of christians should, indeed, be to realise this experience constantly, and one of the main values of the Sacrament is that it makes spiritual communion more vividly real. No one

acquainted with modern psychology will doubt the value of frequent and regular suggestion.

There are within our churches people who hold higher views of Communion than this, and a few go so far as to believe that it is the one essential and all-important service of the church. These people, because of their views on other matters, are debarred from satisfying their souls in any church except our own, and, in our own church, they can only get such satisfaction it if happens to be possible for them to go to the two half-yearly celebrations.

This limitation involves inconsolable loss. In view of concessions made to Unitarians, including the mutilation of beautiful hymns, some consideration might be given to other schools of thought.

Rumour has it that more Communion Services would keep non-communicants from Church, but that difficulty may easily be overcome by arranging for the celebration at other than ordinary services time (preferably in early morning). There would be no compulsion for non-communicants to attend, and surely Non-Subscribing lovers of liberty can have no objection to their brethren, who desire such services, meeting in this way more often than twice a year.

Because this has never been successfully done before, is no reason why it should not be attempted now.

O. S.

Annual Report of the Women's League.

Rosemary Street Branch.

The First Meeting took place on 11th October, 1926, the Catch-My-Pal Movement was inaugurated and gained several more members, 33 members are now on the roll.

A Hallowe'en party was given in the Central Hall, November 1st, and invitations were sent to the other four Branches, Comber, Mountpottinger, Larne and the Domestic Mission, of The Women's League.

Preparations were made for the Sale on April 1st. The following gentlemen, Mr. M'Crum, Mr. C. M'Kisack, Mr. Roche, and the late Mr. Hamilton, kindly gave material to make up for the sale. Beautiful embroidered linen doylies for the Communion Plates were presented to the Church, Mrs. E. Hill kindly getting the embroidery done at her own expense.

A web of flannelette was made up into garments for the Domestic Mission for Christmas.

£15 was given to the Church for Church expenses.

In December, Mrs. Rossington read a very interesting and amusing paper of her personal experience on a Summer Holiday spent in the North of France.

On the invitation of the President and Committee, representatives from each of the five Branches met in the Central Hall on 19th January, 1927, to consider the best means to widen the work of the League, the visitors were entertained to tea, after which there was a very earnest discussion with the result that the five Branches in the North united to form a District League, of which Miss Andrews (Comber) was elected President and Miss Laird (1st House) Hon. Sec. and Treasurer, also an invitation was sent to each congregation to form a Branch and join the District League, and so make the League more powerful for effective work.

The Annual Tea was given to the Stanhope Street Mission, Miss Laird and Mrs. Boyd managed the tea splendidly and every one had a very pleasant time.

A very successful sale was held on 1st April, which was opened by Mrs. Hugh Smylie, who very generously gave a cheque for £5. The object of the Sale was to improve the Culinary Department in the Central Hall. A very substantial amount was realised.

Mr. Rossington kindly gave on behalf of the League, a lecture on Sicily and the money made was given to the Children's Hospital Building Fund.

Two of our members lost their husbands, Mrs. Lowry and Mrs. Hanley. Letters of sympathy were sent in each case.

All our members are very sorry to hear we are to lose our President, Mrs. Rossington, whose untiring energy formed the League. We will miss her very much, but wish her every happiness in her new surroundings. She will leave very pleasant memories in all our affections here, and we hope in the future to have the pleasure of many visits from her, which will keep us all in touch and link up with Mrs. Rossington, Birmingham.

A very satisfactory statement of accounts was presented by Mrs. Rossington and Miss Laird, joint Hon. Treasurers.

Office bearers for the ensuing year was elected as follows: President, Miss Armstrong; Hon. Secretary, Miss E. Ritchie; Hon. Treasurer Miss M. Laird, and Mrs. E. Hill to be head of the work department.

Belfast Domestic Mission.—The Branch of the Women's League connected with the Mission held their first Summer Meeting, on Monday, May 16th, in the Mission Hall. Mrs. M'Ilwrath gave an interesting health talk on "Summer Dangers and how to avoid them." Tea was served and the arrangements completed for the annual excursion on May 30th. This year hospitality has been offered by the ladies of the Cairncastle congregation and members are looking forward to a delightful outing. The winter session closed in April, when members of the First Church Branch entertained the Mission Branch to tea. An enjoyable concert was provided, the artistes being, Mrs. Leslie Hay, Mrs. Snowball, Mrs. S. Ervine, Mrs. E. R. Jackson, and the Misses Orr, Newman and Mooney. Miss Armstrong gave a short resumé of her trip to Canada.

Belfast : York Street.—We have little to report beyond the usual activities of the church during the past month. The Guild held a special social as a wind-up to a successful winter session and there was a very large attendance, indeed lack of accommodation as usual was our difficulty. Two other socials have been held, one on St. Patrick's night, the other as a farewell party to Dr. Maitland, on her departure to Scotland. On Easter Monday about one hundred members spent an enjoyable day at Ballycarry. A Concert and dramatic entertainment was organised by the Sunday School Teachers in aid of the School funds. The summer programme of the Guild includes regular pic-nics and a visit to Dublin is projected. The Spring Communion Service was responsible for the best attendance we have yet had at morning service. At ordinary services the attendance has been very gratifying in view of the fact that without advertising and in what is always a trying time for city congregations we have had as usual to provide extra seats in the evening. An attempt is being made to keep up the attendance in spite of the fact that many of our people for the next few months will be out of town over the week-ends. We hope to see an increase in the number of country visitors in the Summer evenings. University Students continue to attend in fair numbers. The appointment of our minister as Dean of Residences should enable him to extend his influence amongst them and we welcome his nomination not only for its suitability, because of his position amongst the students, but because we feel it to be well deserved. It was entirely through Mr. Agnew's work in the Student Christian Movement that the representative of our Denomination was given his proper place as preacher at the Annual Students' Service in spite of outside opposition which went so far as the refusal of the Assembly Hall a few days before the service took place. The students organised another service elsewhere as may be remembered and from that time no questions have been raised as to the right of our Dean of Residences to take his share in the Religious Life of the University. We have also to congratulate Mr. Agnew on the award to him of the Dufferin Medal for Oratory by the unanimous vote of the University Literary and Scientific Society. The vice President of that Society occupied our pulpit recently while the President, Dr. MacConnail has several times addressed our Guild. During the Summer we hope to further improve the church buildings. The Dramatic Society are preparing an Ulster Play. Several of our young men are already in camp, but make the journey to town for at least one service on Sunday. Visits have been definitely arranged to Raloo and Ballycarry for United Services.

Ballyhemlin.—Miss Jeanie Curry, the adopted daughter of the late Mr. Sam Curry, left for Ontario, Canada, on April 16th, by the White Star Liner, "Doric," with the good wishes of her friends in Ballyhalbert. A presentation was collected in the congregation for her.

Downpatrick.—First Presbyterian Non-Subscribing congregation' s Social Meeting, on Thursday evening was a very pleasant one. Tea was served, and Rev. V. A. Callow, chairman, in welcoming the large gathering, remarked on the spirit of friendliness and good-will which animated all the members of the Churches present. An excellent programme comprised piano solos, Misses M. Henry and M. Huddleston ; violin solos, Miss G. M'Nally ; recitations, Master T. Gardiner ; songs, Misses J. Quinn, E. Pratt, and G. M'Murray, and Mr. T. W. Fairley ; syncopated music by Messrs. D. and W. Maxwell and Miss M'Nally ; selections by the Happy Niggs. Accompanists : Misses A. and M. Dickson, Carmody, Bingham, and A. Twamley. Sunday School prizes, in the shape of books, were presented by Mrs. Callow. After votes of thanks, as proposed by Messrs. J. Newman and C. Stewart, especially to Mr. Jas. Dickson and Miss Jordan, the young people disported themselves in dancing.

Mountpottinger.—The Band of Hope Annual Concert took place in the Schoolroom on Thursday, April 14th. The programme was of a varied character and was much appreciated by a crowded audience. The items included a Pianoforte Solo by Molly Edgar and a Dance by Agnes M'Murray whilst Recitations were given by Eileen Brennan and Eva Evans. Four junior members contributed an Action Song entitled " Dolly's Song " whilst others under the leadership of Eveline Beattie rendered a Chorus " The very worst girl in School." A Tableau " Sleep, Baby, Sleep " was also included in the programme whilst a Burlesque Band whose members were both boys and girls proved an amusing item. The boys in their rendering of " The Tin Can Fusiliers " with Ernest Beattie as Sergeant Major provided the tit-bit of the evening and an encore was vociferously demanded. A playlet entitled " Little Break-my-toys " in which a large caste participated showed evidence of careful training and the costumes were particularly effective. Mrs. T. Patton and Miss D. Young acted as accompanists with much acceptance. During the interval in the programme Rev. M. Watkins who was in the Chair, introduced Miss Dorothy Jackson a prominent Band of Hope worker in our congregation at Mill Hill, Leeds, and following a graceful speech she handed over 30 medals for good attendance during the Winter Session, being in turn the recipient of a handsome bouquet. The highest praise is due to the leader Miss Nellie Allen and her able lieutenant Miss Adelaide Beattie for their labours not only on the evening in question but throughout the Session. The Minister was on holiday on May 8th and 15th the Pulpit being occupied on the former date by Rev. Eustace Thompson and on the latter by Mrs. E. R. Jackson (morning), and Rev. J. A. Kelly (evening.)

MARRIAGE.

M'CLUGHAN—WILKINSON—March 15, at All Souls' Church, Belfast, by the Rev. H. J. Rossington, M.A., B.D.. John Skeffington Palmer M'Clughan, of Duval, Saskatchewan, to Elizabeth (Betty), youngest daughter of the late Robert Wilkinson and Mrs. Wilkinson, St. John's, Hillsborough.

DEATH.

MULLIGAN.—May 11th, 1927, at his residence Alma Lodge, Dromore, Co Down. John Mulligan. Interred in Dromore Unitarian Churchyard, on Friday, 13th May.

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